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For Immediate Release

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Environment Department To Hold Meeting on PNM's Power Generating Station in Las Vegas

(Santa Fe, NM) – The New Mexico Environment Department will hold an open house about an operating, or “Title V,” permit application submitted by the Public Service Company of New Mexico for its Las Vegas power generating station. The open house will be Thursday, July 25 at 6 p.m. at the Tony Serna Jr. Elementary School, 1725 New Mexico Avenue in Las Vegas.

The permit application is to operate the existing 21.55 megawatt electric generating station located in Las Vegas. The turbine-powered electric generating station has been operating since 1973. The Clean Air Act Amendments, which became law in 1990, required any source of emissions that generated more than 100 tons per year of any regulated air pollutants, or 10 tons per year of hazardous air pollutants, to obtain an Air Quality Operating Permit. (Regulated pollutants include, for example, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide.) Hazardous air pollutants include items such as benzene and formaldehyde.)

PNM initially applied for a permit for the Las Vegas facility in December 1995. As with all “transition” permits for existing operations that became subject to the air regulations, the permit was to have been issued by the NMED within three years. However, New Mexico, as with most states, was unable to issue all transition permits within the U.S. EPA timeframe. The NMED should have all transition permits issued by December of 2003, the EPA’s new goal for issuance of all transition permits.

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The draft permit for the facility; the Air Quality Regulations, NMAC 20.2.70, which govern the state permitting process for the generating station; and air quality modeling analysis estimating emissions from the facility will all be available for review at the open house. These documents can also be viewed at the Environment Department's Las Vegas field office at 505 National Avenue, the Department's Air Quality Bureau office at 2048 Galisteo in Santa Fe, and at the Las Vegas Carnegie Public Library at 500 National Avenue.

The open house will allow participants to ask questions, express concerns, react to what is being proposed and even make suggestions to technical experts. Participants will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with factors that may affect their air quality and to express their views to technical and regulatory staff, as well as PNM officials. Displays and informational materials will be provided in non-technical terms and handouts will be available for people to take home for further examination. Participants will also have the opportunity to give written comments and suggestions related to the issues discussed.

Representatives from other Environment Department bureaus will also be present to answer questions concerning water and solid waste issues.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions please feel free to call Lawrence Alires, Air Permitting Specialist, NSR/Title V Permit Section, or Richard Goodyear, Permit Program Manager, NMED Air Quality Bureau, at (505) 827-1494 or (505) 955-8020.

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